AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) An anti-theft device for a vehicle ~~bicycle~~ comprising ~~a bicycle~~ frame and a steering column for steering the vehicle ~~bicycle, mounted on the bicycle frame,~~ which steering column rotationally fixedly couples a steering mechanism ~~bicycle handlebar with a fork for a front wheel,~~ said device comprising:

a coupling piece ~~separating means~~ for neutralising the rotationally fixed coupling, which separates the steering column into two parts and produces the rotationally fixed coupling of these steering column parts when in a first state and neutralises it when in a second state, and

wherein the coupling piece comprises a column piece, which in the first state is inserted between the steering column parts and aligns with them, and which in the second state is completely removed from the steering column parts.

2. (currently amended) The anti-theft device of claim 1, wherein the column piece ~~separating means~~ has a substantially reflection-symmetrical or point-symmetrical construction and on either side of the plane of symmetry has recesses and/or projections, which in the first state engage with complementary means constructed on the steering column parts and in so doing make a form-fit and/or frictional connection and in the second state are released from the complementary means.

3. (cancelled).

4. (currently amended) The anti-theft device of claim 1 [[3]], wherein the column piece is housed in two coupling sleeves disposed axially next to one another and comprising external threads which are in each case provided for an engagement in a corresponding internal thread in the respective adjacent section of the bicycle frame.

5. (previously presented) The anti-theft device of claim 4, wherein the threads are multiple start.

6. (previously presented) The anti-theft device of claim 4, wherein the thread pitch is sufficient to achieve an axial displacement by a predetermined insertion length of the respective coupling sleeve with at most one revolution of each coupling sleeve around the column piece.

7. (currently amended) The anti-theft device of claim 6, further comprising a protecting tube for housing the column piece and the coupling sleeves, which is detachable from the vehicle ~~bicycle frame~~ and which comprises axially displaceable carriers, which upon a rotation of the protecting tube entrain the coupling sleeves .

8. (previously presented) The anti-theft device of claim 7, wherein the carriers are radial pins, which protrude outwardly through at least one axial slot in the protecting tube and which in each case engage with one of the coupling sleeves.

9. (cancelled)

10. (currently amended) The anti-theft device of claim 28 [[9]], wherein, in the second state, the connecting element with the steering column can be removed therefrom or inserted therein, through an opening in the wall of the vehicle ~~bicycle frame~~.

11. (previously presented) The anti-theft device of claim 10, wherein the connecting element comprises an individual profile which can be brought into engagement with a complementary profile on the claws, on a section of the engagement bars that faces the center axis.

12. (previously presented) The anti-theft device of claim 11, wherein the engagement bars are separated from one another, are radially displaceable with respect to the center axis and can be brought into engagement with locking recesses in the steering column parts.

13. (previously presented) The anti-theft device of claim 11, wherein the engagement bars form an inner ring, which is surrounded by an outer ring comprising locking bars which are separated from one another by the formation of end faces and in each case are displaceably mounted on the associated engagement bar of the inner rings, and which also comprises

expansion elements rotatably mounted around the center axis between the end faces of the locking bars for pushing apart the locking bars against an initial stress.

14. (previously presented) The anti-theft device of claim 13, wherein a cross-sectional profile of the expansion elements has a substantially rectangular construction, in a plane through which the center axis passes at right angles.

15. (previously presented) The anti-theft device of claim 14, wherein the sides of the cross-sectional profile of the expansion elements have a concave construction.

Claims 16-19. (cancelled)

20. (previously presented) The anti-theft device of claim 5, wherein the thread pitch is sufficient to achieve an axial displacement by a predetermined insertion length of the respective coupling sleeve with at most one revolution of each coupling sleeve around the column piece.

21. (previously presented) The anti-theft device of claim 20, further comprising a protecting tube for housing the column piece and the coupling sleeves, which is detachable from the vehicle ~~bicycle frame~~ and which comprises axially displaceable carriers, which upon a rotation of the protecting tube entrain the coupling sleeves.

22. (previously presented) The anti-theft device of claim 7, wherein the carriers are radial pins, which protrude outwardly through at least one axial slot in the protecting tube and which in each case engage with one of the coupling sleeves.

23. (previously presented) The anti-theft device of claim 14, wherein the cross sectional profile has rounded corners.

Claims 24-27 (cancelled)

28. (currently amended) An anti-theft device for a vehicle comprising a steering column for steering the vehicle, which steering column rotationally fixedly couples a steering mechanism, said device comprising:

a connecting element ~~separating means~~ for neutralising the rotationally fixed coupling, which separates the steering column into two parts and produces the rotationally fixed coupling of these steering column parts when in a first state and neutralises it when in a second state, and

wherein the connecting element has an annular or frame-shaped construction with engagement bars, which are provided for the engagement with claws of the steering column parts in the first state and which move from the first state into the second state by a rotational movement of the connecting element around a center axis thereof at preferably right angles to an axis of the steering column.

29. (new) The anti-theft device of claim 28, wherein the connecting element has a substantially reflection-symmetrical or point-symmetrical construction and on either side of the plane of symmetry has recesses and/or projections, which in the first state engage with complementary means constructed on the steering column parts and in so doing make a form-fit and/or frictional connection and in the second state are released from the complementary means.